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Marketing Activities

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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IN THIS ISSUE:

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What About Eggs?

Eggs again take the spotlight as we approach the season of flush spring production. It takes no prophet to predict that there probably will be plenty of eggs this year. They will be cheaper, so that it shouldn't be too difficult to persuade consumers to buy more. But the poultry industry is still operating at the wartime production rate of 50 percent above normal, and outlets for the expanded production are decreasing steadily.

This oversupply might result in costly surpluses under the present price-support program. Consequently, plans are under way for USDA and the industry to cooperate in a program that includes (1) informing consumers of the need for making the fullest use of possible egg surpluses; (2) making the most economical use of feed wheat to conserve the supply for sharing with foreign countries; and (3) culling laying flocks and increasing the number of pullets--the most efficient layers.

Production in 1945 amounted to 432 eggs on a per capita basis. Of this number, U. S. civilians consumed about 390 eggs and the armed forces, exports, and eggs for hatching accounted for the other 42 eggs per capita out of total production. If civilians should consume, say, only 350 to 360 eggs of the 415 per capita supply for 1946, egg producers would have to do heavier culling than usual to adjust supply to consumption. In addition, requirements for the armed forces may drop to a third of their 1945 size because of the rapid demobilization of the Army. Present indications are that the over-all use of eggs by U. S. civilians, the armed services, and for export and hatching would amount to around 385 to 395 eggs on a per capita basis. This means 20 to 30 eggs per capita would need to be disposed of, and points up the need for stepping up egg consumption through domestic and export channels to support producer prices.

Although export demand could take up sizable quantities of dried eggs, they are expensive for relief feeding and for this reason foreign shipments of them probably would be limited. Last year 100-125 million pounds of dried eggs went for lend-lease purposes. This year probably only a third to a half of that amount will be used for shipments abroad.

It looks as if many of these plentiful eggs would go into cold storage. This season there is the speculative element of a greater demand for eggs for storage and of a firm market, as indicated in the increase in futures prices on the mercantile market. The drop in cold-storage holdings of shell, frozen, and dried eggs from 13,727,000 cases on February 1, 1945, to 5,067,000 cases on February 1, 1946, is accounted for by the increased number of eggs dried for Army use last year. Cold-storage holdings of eggs for the 5 years ended February 1, 1945, averaged only 2,353,000 cases.

Consumers will be encouraged by USDA and industry organizations to take up the abundant supplies expected this season. Consumer use of eggs will be stimulated when their availability and their nutritious qualities in daily menus are pointed out by newspapers, trade journals, magazines, and radio networks and stations. If eggs are to be made attractive to consumers, their quality will have to be preserved; to accomplish this preservation the cooperation of producers, handlers, and the retail trade will be needed.

Grain and Feed

An important factor in the egg situation this spring is feed and grain. Used as feed for poultry and livestock as well are large quantities of wheat, alone or mixed. Our supply of animal feeds is diminishing rapidly, and a more even distribution of grain and protein feeds will be necessary to meet the requirements of producers of animal products. Feed grain supplies expected to be available for domestic use from January 1, 1946, until new crops are available total approximately 54,537,000 tons exclusive of possible imports, compared with 54,949,000 tons for the corresponding period last season and a 5-year average of 51,558,000 tons. However, as of January 1, 1946, there were 147,714,000 animal units—livestock, chickens, and turkeys--to feed, or approximately 540,000 more than last year.

Although total supplies were large, commercial stocks of feed grains and byproduct feeds were insufficient in January to meet the unusual demand at ceiling prices. Competition for feed concentrates is expected to continue keen throughout the spring season. The combined disappearance of corn, oats, and barley during the last quarter of 1945 was 9 percent larger than in the corresponding quarter of 1944, and only 2 percent smaller than the record disappearance in the last quarter of 1943. The feeding of hogs to heavy weights, the liberal use of grain and concentrates fed to milk cows and beef cattle, the high production rate of eggs per layer, and the feeding of turkeys and broilers to heavier weights are reflected in the larger-than-usual disappearance of feed grains during the fourth quarter of 1945.

Corn constitutes 80 percent of all feed grain used for livestock and poultry. But disappearance of corn in the October-December quarter, one of the highest on record, was 11 percent greater than in the corresponding quarter of 1944, with about the same number of grain-consuming livestock on farms. On January 1, 1946, corn stocks on farms and at terminal markets were the smallest in 7 years. Feed mixers and feeders in deficit areas and corn processors who depend almost entirely on commercial supplies are feeling the tight corn supply, and despite the substantial volume of corn moving into commercial channels the supply has fallen far short of demand. Uneven distribution brought about by the development of unusual trading practices, including barter, has complicated the situation. The reported movement of larger-than-usual quantities of corn by truck this season is believed to have cut down the volume that might otherwise have moved to more distant deficit areas.

Stocks of oats on farms and at terminal markets were the largest on record. The quantity of wheat used for livestock and poultry feeding since July was much smaller than the record quantity fed during the same period in 1943, but substantially greater than was fed during the last quarter of most earlier years. The carry-over of corn, oats, and barley at the end of the current marketing year may be 2 million tons less than the 14.2 million tons on hand at the end of the 1944-45 marketing year—with all of the reduction occurring in corn and barley. Stocks of wheat will be reduced also.

War Food Orders

To conserve the supply of wheat and flour under the program to provide a portion for foreign export, USDA issued War Food Order 144, effective February 18, 1946. The order implements the exportation of wheat and flour by limiting the use of wheat by mixed feed manufacturers to specified percentages of the quantity used in the period December 1, 1945, through January 31, 1946. Following the pattern of diminishing seasonal requirements, these percentages were 75 percent during the remainder of February and through March, 70 percent in April, 65 percent in May, and 60 percent in June and the following months. The order prohibits the use of wheat in any form in mixtures of grain for sale as an ingredient in the manufacture of mixed feed, and the use of flour in mixed feed, unless it is flour unfit for human consumption. It also limits wheat and flour inventories of mixed feed manufacturers, millers, food manufacturers, and distributors.

WFO 9 was reinstated January 15, 1946, to conserve protein feeds for use in the manufacture or preparation of poultry feeds. Allowable percentages of protein meal based upon the corresponding month of 1945 extend from 100 percent in January and February to 85 percent in May and the following months, in line with poultry and egg production goals. A later amendment limited receipts of wheat millfeeds during any calendar quarter to one-sixth of total receipts in 1945 and the use of wheat millfeeds in the manufacture of mixed feeds to two-thirds of the quantity used in 1945.

Culling

National goals call for a 15 percent reduction in egg production in 1946 and a 13 percent cut in chicks raised. By hewing close to the line producers can help to prevent egg surpluses, equalize egg production over the entire year, and conserve feed supplies. But until poultry numbers are reduced there is a likelihood of egg surpluses, particularly during the early spring season of heavy production.

USDA suggests that in culling this year producers leave a larger percentage of pullets than is customary, to conserve maximum quantities of grain to help meet foreign commitments. But even if we were not trying to save wheat we would need a reduction in flocks this year to bring production into alinement with peacetime requirements. If laying flocks should consist of at least 75 percent pullets instead

of the present 69 it would help to prevent overproduction of eggs in the spring by older and poorer stock and assure production of a maximum number of eggs per bird.

Because of reduced quantities of wheat and protein for poultry feed later in the season it will not be possible to carry over large numbers of laying hens, especially the poorer egg producers. Producers who buy chicks for egg production next fall--a season usually low in egg production--should be able to obtain a good price for their eggs.

1946 Price-Support Program

Under the Steagall Act we are committed to price support for 2 years (after the first January following the official announcement of the close of the war) for specified agricultural products, including shell eggs, turkeys, and chickens (except live chickens under 3½ pounds in weight).

Producers will receive an average price of 29 cents a dozen for edible eggs of average grade and quality during the spring months under the 1946 price-support program. Producers in the Midwest, where prices are generally lower than in the West or East, will average 27 cents per dozen for all grades and sizes of edible eggs.

Under the price-support program the Department of Agriculture will purchase both dried and frozen eggs and later may buy a small quantity of shell eggs from processors, dealers, and cooperative associations at prices reflecting about 90 percent of parity to producers. Sellers to USDA of eggs in any form must certify payment to producers of the support price.

Egg surpluses are expected to be heaviest in the Midwest, the largest producing area. Here, with drying plants able to handle 2½ to 3 million cases of shell eggs each month during the flush production season, egg drying will be used as the principal means of price support. In dried form eggs can be stored, rehandled, and shipped more easily and with greater saving of space than in any other form. This is a particularly desirable feature since outlets for export are indefinite and may call for storage for fairly long periods. In addition, storage facilities in foreign countries are not available for large quantities of eggs in any other form.

Where drying facilities are lacking or where temporary surpluses overtax drying facilities, USDA will buy frozen eggs from processors and hold them in freezers for later drying or for use as frozen eggs. If USDA buys shell eggs at all it will be only as an emergency measure in areas where drying and freezing facilities are lacking and in cases of temporary surplus when producer prices may fall below the support level.

Egg requirements for the first postwar year or two are problematical and their determination will have to be made gradually. Continuing price

support for eggs and poultry to underwrite increased wartime production under the 1946 price-support program gives producers a chance to taper off production to a peacetime level without heavy financial losses.

Uneven production is not the only factor that brings about egg surpluses. Shortages of containers, transportation, and labor may also cause temporary surpluses and make for inefficient distribution of supplies backing up in the market during the flush season. There is still a shortage of egg cases. Prompt return of cases where possible and the repair of wooden cases will aid in stretching the supply and assist in getting eggs to market. Transportation difficulties and shortages of labor may slow down shipments. But a careful watching of the situation should keep egg supplies from piling up during transportation and at processing points.

BEEF SET-ASIDE PERCENTAGE CHANGED

Further action to facilitate procurement of meat for foreign commitments by increasing the set-aside percentages on lower grades of beef was announced by USDA on March 14. At the same time, it was announced that more of the higher grades of beef would be available to civilians as a result of a decrease in the set-aside on Choice and Good grades.

Through amendment 36 to WFO 75.2 (steers, heifers, and cows) federally inspected slaughterers, and additional plants certified under WFO 139, will be required to set aside the following percentages of the conversion weight of each week's production: Commercial grade, 40 percent; Utility grade, 50 percent; Canner and Cutter grades, 60 percent. Before the action, the set-aside percentages on these three grades were 30, 40, and 50 respectively. Officials pointed out that these types of meat are required for fulfilling foreign shipments. To meet current requirements, and because these grades comprise a lower proportion of the total slaughter at this time of the year, it was considered necessary to revise these set-aside percentages upward.

This amendment, effective March 17, also provides that the set-aside percentages of Choice and Good grades of beef be reduced from 30 to 20 percent. Set-aside meat of these grades is purchased primarily by the Army. Since the two grades make up a seasonally larger proportion of meat slaughtered and military needs are now less pressing, it was possible to make the reduction in the set-aside percentages. This will make a somewhat larger quantity of higher grade beef currently available for civilian consumption in this country.

Blasting With Farm Wastes

Early in the war the Navy Department sent an S O S to the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Could it name any inexpensive nonfood soft-grit blasting material, obtainable in large volume, that would remove heavy carbon and oil deposits from the cylinders and pistons of aircraft engines?

The Army, it seemed, had tried using wheat. Also without success it had tried hominy grits, clover seed, and similar foods and feeds. And cellulose-acetate pellets would not do because they cost too much.

Did USDA know of any other soft-grit blasting material?

USDA thought it did. Its Bureau of Agricultural Chemistry thought it knew two materials which, after a period of technological research, might turn out to be just what the Navy needed--and which might develop a market for farm waste materials as well.

The two products were rice hulls and corncobs.

USDA's northern regional research laboratory at Peoria, Ill., joined forces with the Assembly and Repair Department of the Naval Air Station of Norfolk, Va., and went to work. Their experiments showed that the cobs and hulls were entirely satisfactory not only for cleaning engine parts but also for numerous other uses in metal cleaning and fabricating. Moreover, they fitted three other requirements—availability, suitable first cost, and suitable period of usefulness.

The Navy's Bureau of Aeronautics adopted them as standard.

Process Does More Work

The soft-grit blasting process has made it possible to clean from 4 to 10 times as many parts as by the older methods, with appreciable savings in man-hours. Older methods of scraping, turning on lathes, and sandblasting damaged many pistons and parts and made them unfit for use. The soft-grit process calls for degreasing the pistons, cylinders, or other parts, then cleaning them in a blasting cabinet using grit under air pressure of 80 to 90 pounds per square inch. Dust and dirt are blown into a collector, and the grits are recirculated until they work out.

Under Navy specifications, corncobs are ground to pass a 10-mesh screen and be retained by a 32-mesh screen (Tyler screen series), with no chaff or pith particles and with not more than 13 percent moisture present in the cobs. Hybrid seed-corn operations produce the most suitable corncobs for this purpose because they are dried during preparation.

The ground corncobs clean airplane cylinders and pistons without changing their dimensions and without pitting the parts. An additional feature of the process is that although the particles used may shrink about 50 percent in volume, they are free from dirt and still capable of doing good work.

Rice hulls may be used as is, with no grinding or cracking before use, because the blasting process breaks them down sufficiently. An 18 percent silica content makes them slightly abrasive to steel. Rice hulls do not last as long as cob grit. Experimentation showed that a mixture of 60 percent corncob grit and 40 percent rice hulls would flow easily through the air gun and clean more rapidly than corncobs alone.

The soft-grit blasting process has been found satisfactory for cleaning automotive, air-compressor, and other machine parts and for removing paint and other finishes from metal surfaces. The process effectively cleans engine blocks encrusted in one-fourth to one-half inch of grease, carbon, oil, and dirt. Machine parts that have collected much grease and oil should be cleaned by wiping or with solvents before blasting.

The soft-grit method leaves crankshaft bearing surfaces clean and unpitted. The corncob-rice-hull combination is very successful on cast-iron engine heads. Spark plugs come clean after a soft-grit treatment, yet there is no widening of the gap between the electrodes with consequent need to reset the points. A 5-minute blasting of the corncob-rice-hull mixture against air compressor parts caked with carbon and dirt will remove heavy encrustations from the small holes and threads.

Scale and Rust

The process effectively blasts scale and rust. It will not however entirely remove scale, formed in the hardening of steel, that acts as an integral part of the metal. From metal surfaces soft grit easily removes paint, varnish, and lacquer--even if the products have synthetic bases. It will remove rust and welding scale--but did not dislodge hard scale from drawn-steel wire in an experiment to eliminate the pickling step before coating the wire with zinc. Here again, the hard scale acted as an integral part of the metal surface. Soft-grit blasting is not recommended for the removal of paint and varnish from wood surfaces since it tends to gouge out the wood. It is not suitable for removing mill scale and baked enamel, for smoothing castings, or for other operations on metals requiring high abrasive or cutting action. The process is not effective for polishing hard metals or for burnishing.

The news is getting around that soft-grit blasting does a good job. In large industrial establishments the process can be used in standard blasting equipment without alterations. Metal-using industries will find

it practicable in maintenance and repair. Installation of simple booths and equipment would make soft-grit blasting a good business for a great many shops that repair automobiles, farm machinery, and other machinery. Low-cost equipment including booths, air-compressors, air guns, and dust collectors or cyclones is needed to bring soft-grit blasting within the reach of smaller concerns. Development of the process could open an annual market for thousands of tons of rice hulls and corncobs.

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CORN CONSERVATION MEASURES RECOMMENDED

A series of measures designed to prevent the spoilage of high-moisture corn held on farms in the Midwest was recommended by USDA on March 20. The recommendations reflected the pressing necessity of conserving grain for both animal and human consumption as a means of assuring wheat shipments needed to relieve famine abroad.

Rising temperatures during the coming few weeks might cause spoilage of soft corn remaining in cribs in the Corn Belt, according to USDA agricultural engineers who had been studying the situation. It is possible for soft corn to be severely damaged in only a few days under conditions favorable to heating and mold growth.

Reports from the Midwest indicated that although a large part of the crop put into cribs last fall already had been fed or sold, farmers were still feeding heavily. Feeding soft corn and drying it in mechanical dryers before warm weather arrives are the only sure ways to save it.

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ADDITIONAL SET-ASIDE PROVISIONS ANNOUNCED

USDA announced on March 8 that set-aside provisions in effect on meat and lard had been extended to nonfederally inspected slaughterers whose plants have been certified by the Secretary of Agriculture under the terms of WFO 139. Beginning March 10, 1946, these plants will be required to set aside for Government procurement specified percentages of their output of beef, veal, mutton, pork, and lard, with the exception of Army-style beef.

The action was taken to implement further the procurement of meat and lard for meeting the critical foreign needs for these essential food items. Approximately 100 additional slaughtering plants are affected.

RESTRICTIONS ON WHEAT MILLFEEDS ANNOUNCED

USDA early in March announced (1) limitations on receipts of wheat millfeeds and (2) restrictions on the use of such products in the manufacture of mixed feeds.

These limitations are included in an amendment to War Food Order 9, which governs the use of protein meal in the manufacture of mixed feeds for livestock and poultry.

Effective April 1, 1946, it was provided that no person, during any calendar quarter, shall receive or accept wheat millfeeds, or offer to receive or accept wheat millfeeds, whether by purchase and sale, trade, barter, gift, loan, exchange, or otherwise, in any quantity which will cause his total receipts of wheat millfeeds during such calendar quarter to exceed one-sixth of his total receipts of wheat millfeeds during the calendar year 1945.

Effective March 1, 1946, it was further provided that no person shall, during any calendar month, use wheat millfeeds in the manufacture of mixed feeds, including poultry feed, in excess of two-thirds of the quantity of wheat millfeeds so used by that person during the corresponding calendar month of 1945.

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PROGRAM FOR 1946 FLAXSEED BASED ON PRODUCTION

The difference between the support and ceiling prices of the flaxseed crop harvested in 1946 will be paid to growers through the Production and Marketing Administration on sales receipts or other acceptable evidence, USDA announced on March 25.

Flaxseed of the 1945 crop is not eligible for such payments. The support price announced by the Government on November 8 for the 1946 crop is $3.60 a bushel, Minneapolis basis, for No. 1 flaxseed. The present ceiling price at Minneapolis is $3.10.

Farmers are urged to market 1945-crop flaxseed now on farms, since requirements for linseed oil are extremely heavy for use in the manufacture of automobiles, refrigerators, washing machines, paint, oilcloth, linoleum, and other items essential in reconversion.

Manufacturers' quotas for the use of linseed oil are now only 75 percent of prewar use. Unless the 1945-crop flaxseed is marketed promptly, the shortage of such supplies will be further aggravated, officials said.

Agricultural Transportation Prospects

Transportation, vitally important during the war, is still vitally important. This year grain and other foodstuffs will need to be moved to ports for export to famine-gripped lands. Civilian goods must be moved to market to replenish depleted stocks. What is the transportation situation at present--has it improved now that we don't need to transport munitions and tanks and have had a little time to make facility replacements? What is the outlook for the next few months?

The tight transportation situation has carried over into postwar months when each branch of transportation service has had to face its own peculiar difficulties. During the war, the interruption of coastwise shipping and the removal from the Great Lakes of certain vessels added to the burden of the railroads. Boxcars and refrigerator cars wore out faster when they were in continuous use. Sometimes boxcars had to substitute for refrigerator cars and vice versa. Natural rubber for truck tires was short; a change-over to synthetic rubber had to be made. Labor shortages hampered.

Refrigerator Cars and Boxcars

Of the 146,000 railroad and privately owned refrigerator cars on track when the war began, more than 2,000 have had to be retired each year since 1941. Since replacement of many of these cars was not possible during the war, we now have fewer than 136,000 refrigerator cars--and some of these cannot be used to haul perishable products. These veterans of the road have taken a lot of punishment: 7,876 were held for repairs in owners' shops on February 1, 1946; allowing for cars enroute to shops or on non-owner lines, the total needing repairs probably exceeded 10,000.

But while transportation facilities have dwindled, the production of fresh fruits and vegetables has risen steadily since the war began. Today, food requirements for U. S. civilians and foreign relief export equal and in some cases exceed requirements in 1945. Materials for car building are short and labor conditions uncertain. And although about 1,000 new refrigerator cars are ordered, this much new equipment will do no more than replace cars worn out during the current year. Boxcars also have been seriously scarce; for some months large stocks of grain have remained in country elevators because of the lack. In general the movement of grain, grain products, and other nonperishable foods has been retarded because boxcars were not available.

Grain requires a tight, leakproof car. Before the war about 60 percent of U. S. cars were suitable for grain loading. Today only an estimated 45 percent of the cars are tight (or could be made so by a few repairs).

The boxcar shortage adversely affected the movement of grain for relief export in January and February. This was followed by an Interstate Commerce Commission order giving preference to the supplying of cars for hauling grain to terminals and food products meant for export.

Industry's swing to the 5-day week, which means 1 day less for loading and unloading cars, has been another contributor toward slower movement of agricultural and other products, and absenteeism and labor-management difficulties have taken many a car-day.

Commercial Motortrucks

Production of commercial motortrucks for civilian use was cut back severely during the war. In October 1945 the output was 40,900 units and in November it was 53,103. After a drop in December, production rose in January to 54,864 units and then fell to 30,000 units in February because of labor troubles and shortages of materials. Truck requirements can be met if labor and management in associated industries get together soon, but it will take time to rebuild inventories. One pressing need is light and medium trucks for agricultural use.

The situation is brighter in truck parts production, but lead is short and the production of batteries barely meets minimum requirements. We are just about making ends meet on tires.

Coastwise and Intercoastal Shipping

Domestic transportation is expected to improve with the resumption of coastwise and intercoastal shipping. Many dry-cargo ships are available. Sailings between the Atlantic and Pacific coasts have been made for several months and coastwise service has been resumed on the Pacific coast. So far operators have been unwilling to restore the Gulf and Atlantic coastwise service because of the risk of operating losses under prewar rates and present costs. Under consideration is a proposal whereby the War Shipping Administration would take over this service and private companies would operate the ships as WSA agents. Resumption of shipping service between Gulf and North Atlantic ports is expected by late spring or early summer.

The package freight business on the Great Lakes, conducted before the war by the Great Lakes Transit Corporation, ceased when the Government took over the entire fleet for coastwise and other uses. Some of these vessels have been sold abroad. None will be returned to the lakes although shippers of flour and dairy products who formerly used the service are anxious for its restoration. Planned, however, is a package freight service with five vessels formerly in the bulk freight trade.

The Great Lakes service has been important in moving grain from Northwest terminals to the lower lake ports. In the foreign relief program, grain for export will be transferred to rail or barge lines

at those points for routing to North Atlantic ports. During the war the movement of grain on the lakes increased from 114 million bushels in 1941 in vessels of United States registry to an all-time high of 374 million bushels in 1945. This year when it is important to expedite shipments of grain for relief feeding, shipping facilities on the lakes are expected to be adequate.

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MEAT SET-ASIDE PROVISIONS ANNOUNCED

To implement further the President's 9-point program for meeting critical food needs abroad, the Department of Agriculture has announced two measures designed to step up the procurement of meat. The set-aside of pork required of federally inspected meat packers was increased from 10 to 13 percent, and the set-aside percentages on beef, veal, and mutton were extended to 10 States formerly exempted, effective March 3.

Department officials said the revised set-aside provisions are intended to facilitate procurement of the quantities of meat necessary for fulfilling allocations for foreign shipments during the remainder of the first half of 1946.

Increases in the pork set-aside will require federally inspected meat packers in 37 States to set aside for Government purchase a quantity of pork and pork products (other than lard) the weight of which will equal 13 percent of the live weight of hogs slaughtered each week. This action was taken through amendment 28 to War Food Order 75.3, effective March 3. Since February 17, such packers had been required to set aside 10 percent of their production for Government purchase. Eleven Southeastern States are exempt from the pork set-aside provisions. There was no change in the lard set-aside, which remains at a quantity equal to 5 percent of the live weight of hogs slaughtered weekly.

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SUPPORT PRICE ON 1946-CROP SOYBEANS ANNOUNCED

Because of the tight situation on protein meals and edible and industrial oils, USDA late in February announced that the 1946 grower support price on soybeans would be the same as for 1945. The action was taken to assist farmers in meeting the 1946 goals for this crop.

Base support price for the 1946-crop green and yellow soybeans grading U. S. No. 2 will be $2.04 per bushel. The same differentials specified under the 1945 program will be made for other colors of beans, and for variations in quality.

PUBLIC HEARING ON CITRUS MARKETING AGREEMENT ANNOUNCED

Proposed amendments to the Florida citrus marketing agreement and order will be considered at a public hearing to be held March 25 at Lakeland, Fla. Marketing Agreement 84 and Order 33, which regulate the handling of oranges, grapefruit, and tangerines grown in Florida, have been in effect since February 22, 1939.

The hearing was requested by the Growers Administrative Committee and the Shippers Advisory Committee, which administer the marketing program. Consideration will be given to the proposal to permit regulations which would prohibit citrus shipments from Florida for limited periods during certain portions of the marketing season. In addition, the proposed amendments would make possible the regulation of Florida Temple oranges and pink varieties of grapefruit separate from other varieties of oranges and grapefruit.

On the basis of evidence presented at the hearing, the proposed amendments may be submitted to the Secretary of Agriculture for tentative approval and if they are so approved, they will be submitted to the industry. The amendments may be made effective if the issuance of the amended order is favored by at least two-thirds of the growers, by number or by volume of citrus fruits produced, who vote in the referendum and if handlers of at least 50 percent of the volume of citrus fruits shipped from Florida sign the amended agreement.

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FATS AND OILS QUOTA REDUCED TO MEET FOOD NEEDS ABROAD

Effective April 1, 1946, the emergency quota of 4 percent on fats and oils for manufacture of salad and cooking oils, and shortening, which has been effective under WFO 42 since October 1, 1945, will be discontinued in order to help meet the President's program calling for the export during 1946 of 375,000 tons of fats and oils for critical food needs abroad.

The expected yield of oil from the four principal vegetable oil sources (cotton, peanut, corn, and soybean) from 1945 crops shows some decline from the original estimates. The decrease is due principally to lower December estimates of the cotton and peanut crops and less than expected processing of corn and peanuts for oil. This shrinkage has broadened the spread between supplies available and essential needs which must be met.

Quotas of manufacturers of cooking and salad oils and shortening will be maintained at 88 percent of the base period rate of use--the percentage in effect before October 1, 1945.

Cotton Tire Cords Improved

Research on tire-cord materials was begun early in the war to provide the armed forces with the most dependable tires that could be produced. Rubber was scarce. What varieties of cotton were best for making cords for synthetic rubber tires? What type of cord did we need to turn out the sturdiest tire?

The Bureau of Agricultural and Industrial Chemistry's southern regional research laboratory in New Orleans and the Bureau of Plant Industry, Soils, and Agricultural Engineering cooperated in selecting the varieties of cotton whose physical properties, on the basis of spinning and other laboratory tests, would produce a stronger cord to use with synthetic rubber.

After getting the answer on the cotton varieties best adapted for tire making, they pondered which type of cord would give the best performance for use with synthetic rubber. The answer was low-gage cords. These placed close together, they said, would make a stronger tire fabric than single high-gage cords, would take less rubber, and the smaller size of the cords would result in a cooler-running tire with thinner walls.

To get ready for production of tires tough enough to withstand wartime punishment, low-gage cord fabrics made from selected cotton varieties were supplied to a tire manufacturing company to make the first experimental tires. These were intended for trucks, size 7.50-20, of 90 percent synthetic rubber and 10 percent natural rubber, with a tread suitable for military use. The Army tested the finished tires on the Ordnance Tire Test Fleet at San Antonio, Tex.

Tests

Tests run amounted to 14 million truck miles, and by the middle of 1944, records on tires showed a grand total of more than 90 million miles. The San Antonio locality provided the climatic conditions and types of roads and terrain suitable for thorough testing. The tests demonstrated the performance of synthetic rubber military tires made with a framework of improved cotton cords on 2½ ton cargo trucks with a 5,000-pound pay load. Roads were 70 percent paved, 15 percent gravel, and 15 percent cross-country on this test course. Tires were changed systematically every 800 miles so that tire wear would be uniform. Although standard cotton cord tires performed satisfactorily, cords made from the selected varieties of cotton gave much higher mileages and resisted rock ledges and other obstacles better. Similar tire tests were made at the Army Ordnance Desert Proving Ground at Camp Seely, Calif.

The southern regional laboratory also tested tires for passenger cars and highway trucks in the summer and fall of 1944. These included

standard and improved cotton cords in 6.00-16 passenger car tires, and standard and improved cotton cords and rayon in 7.00-20 light truck tires. The improved cotton cord in the tires was made from Wilds cotton. In these tests, made by the Government Tire Test Fleet of the War Production Board at San Antonio, the same gage for the improved cotton cord was used as was used in the standard cord, and the purpose was to test cotton variety only.

Passenger car tests were made on 1942 4-door type automobiles run on paved highways at 60 miles an hour. Performances of both standard and improved cotton cords were entirely satisfactory for passenger cars. Carcasses of both sets of tires outlasted the rubber. With one recapping, all but one of the tires made with these cords ran nearly 70,000 miles.

For light truck use, tests showed that rayon and improved cotton cord gave a better performance than the standard cotton cord. Wilds cotton tires in the 7.00-20 rear-wheel service tests gave three times the mileage of standard cord tires. Rayon tires gave 16 percent more than the Wilds--mainly because of the difference in the type of cord construction. However, the rate of tread wear was less on the cotton than on the rayon tires. Information on such factors as cord gage and cord construction obtained in the tests should assist in the development of better types of cotton tire cord for larger size truck and bus tires.

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CCC COTTON STOCK SALES PUT ON BID BASIS

After March 15, sales of Commodity Credit Corporation stocks of owned and pooled cotton will be on a bid basis. The cotton will be sold to the highest bidder, but bids will not be accepted below parity.

Bids will be invited each weekday except Saturday, and awards will be made on the basis of the closing market price that day. Complete details of this procedure will be issued to cotton catalog holders by the New Orleans office of the Cotton Branch, Production and Marketing Administration.

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LINSEED OIL INVENTORIES LIMITED TO 4-MONTH SUPPLY

Users of linseed oil are limited to a 4-month inventory under amendment 3 to WFO 124, USDA has announced. Under the amendment, no user may purchase or contract to purchase linseed oil in any quantity which, when added to his physical inventory, will exceed a 4-month supply.

FISH CONTAINERS SHORT

On March 7 USDA advised the fish industry that it faced a serious shortage of wooden and fiber containers during the succeeding several months. Department spokesmen said that production of such containers was far below normal, and that no improvement could be expected until fall.

The industry was urged to conserve and re-use old containers wherever possible, anticipate requirements for new containers, and place orders promptly. It was advised also to take delivery of containers whenever and wherever they are available.

Bad weather, shortages of logs and labor, and other factors were blamed by the Department for the reduced output of wooden containers. The tin-plate supply situation also was reported tight, but Department officials expressed confidence that the fish industry's seasonal requirements for tin cans, particularly for quality fish, would be met.

VIOLATORS OF WFO 1 WARNED

War Food Order 1, which prohibits the consignment selling of bread and other bakery products, is playing a key role in the current campaign to provide more wheat for Europe, and USDA has warned that violators of the regulation will be prosecuted.

One outgrowth of consignment selling in the past was the return to bakers of bread and other goods unsold by retailers. While some of the returned products were distributed to consumers through bakers' "day old stores," large quantities were fed to livestock or destroyed. Surveys made prior to the issuance of WFO 1 early in 1943 revealed an alarming waste of critical ingredients--flour, shortening, dried milk, and sugar--through the consignment selling practice.

Compliance with the ban against consignment selling generally has been good, Department officials say. During the 3 years the order has been in effect, a little over 400 companies in violation have been uncovered--a good record in view of the fact that approximately 28,000 commercial baking establishments and about 300,000 grocers and other retailers are affected by the order's provisions.

In view of the urgent need to eliminate waste of food, however, the Department will vigorously prosecute all wilful violators of the order. Bakers, grocers, and other distributors of bakery products are asked to report promptly to the nearest compliance field office of the Department any violations coming to their attention. These offices are located at Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, New York, and San Francisco.

ABOUT MARKETING:

The following address and publications, issued recently, may be obtained upon request. To order, check on this page the publications desired, detach and mail to the Production and Marketing Administration, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C.

Address:

Rural Electrification in the Nation's Farm Program, by Clinton P. Anderson, Secretary of Agriculture, at Buffalo, N. Y. March 4, 1946. 7 pp. (Mimeographed.)

Publications:

Facts About Cotton. MP 594. (United States Department of Agriculture and State Agricultural Extension Services cooperating) February 1946. 64 pp. (Multilithed.)

Marketing and Manufacturing Margins for Tobacco. Technical Bulletin No. 913. March 1946. 56 pp. (Printed.)

Annual Report on Tobacco Statistics, 1945. CS-16. December 1945. 97 pp. (Multilithed.)

High-Level Food Consumption in the United States. MP 581. (United States Department of Agriculture) December 1945. 48 pp. (Printed.)

Farm Production, Disposition, and Income Turkeys, 1944-45. (Bureau of Agricultural Economics) March 1946. 8 pp. (Mimeographed.)

Poultry-Ration Costs and Poultry-Feed Price Ratios, 1924-45. (Bureau of Agricultural Economics) March 1946. 75 pp. (Mimeographed.)

Shipments of Package Bees in 1945. (Bureau of Agricultural Economics) March 1, 1946. 2 pp. (Mimeographed.)

Mohair Production and Income, 1944 and 1945. (Bureau of Agricultural Economics) March 5, 1946. 1 p. (Mimeographed.)

Wool Production and Income, 1944-45. (Bureau of Agricultural Economics) March 1, 1946. 2 pp. (Mimeographed.)

Check List of Publications Issued During January 1946. (Bureau of Agricultural Economics) January 1946. 6 pp. (Mimeographed.)